Esprit Orchestra

Alex Pauk • Music Director and Conductor



CD Concert III

Friday, April 7, 1995

Jane Mallett Theatre • St. Lawrence Centre





Alex Pauk, Esprit Orchestra and Bernard West, Rhône-Poulenc

RHÔNE-POULENC is pleased to sponsor, for the second year, a concert by Esprit Orchestra, in particular, *CD Concert III*.

Bernard West President Rhône-Poulenc Canada Inc.

PROGRAMME

Esprit Orchestra

Alex Pauk • Conductor

Friday, April 7, 1995 • 8:00 p.m.

Jane Mallett Theatre • St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

CD Concert III



Featuring

Robert Aitken (flute) NEXUS (percussion)

Peepers *, 1995

John Wyre (Canada)

for NEXUS and strings

WORLD PREMIERE

Nocturne, 1958

Colin McPhee (Canada)

Berceuse, 1992

for flute and orchestra

Robert Aitken (Canada)

INTERMISSION

Touchings, 1989

Harry Freedman (Canada)

for NEXUS and orchestra

Music for Heaven and Earth, 1990

Alexina Louie (Canada)

*Peepers is an Esprit commission made possible through the financial assistance of the Laidlaw Foundation.



This world premiere performance of *Peepers* is sponsored by AT&T Canada.

Tonight's programme is being recorded by CBC Stereo for broadcast on *Two New Hours* 94.1 FM in Toronto, Sunday, June 4 at 10:05 p.m.

Please join us in the lobby after the concert for complimentary coffee.

Minister of Communications



Ministre des Communications



Message de Michel Dupuy, C.P., député Ministre du Patrimoine canadien

Message from Michel Dupuy, P.C., M.P. Minister of Canadian Heritage

Music in all its forms is a vital component of Canadian life. Music will always play a central role in defining the Canadian identity, thanks to the efforts of dedicated organizations such as Esprit Orchestra.

This year's new and exciting event, Toward a Living Art Mini-Festival, brings together young musicians, composers and guest artists in a spirit of learning and for the pure enjoyment of great music. Esprit Orchestra has created an opportunity to encourage Canada's burgeoning musicians and to draw well-deserved attention to the best of new Canadian music.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I am pleased to extend my best wishes to all for a most successful and memorable festival.

Quel que soit le style qu'elle revêt, la musique fait partie intégrante de la vie des Canadiens et des Canadiennes; en ce sens, elle influe directement sur l'affirmation de notre identité collective. Aussi faut-il remercier les organismes comme Esprit Orchestra qui se dévouent et consacrent nombre d'efforts à favoriser son expression.

Les activités, qui se déroulent cette année sous le thème Toward a Living Art Mini-Festival, réunissent des musiciens, des compositeurs et des artistes pour partager leurs connaissances et leur passion de la musique. Esprit Orchestra contribue à la reconnaissance des musiciens canadiens émérites, et met en valeur leur talent et leur création.

En tant que ministre du Patrimoine canadien, je présente mes voeux les plus chaleureux à tous et à toutes et vous souhaite le plus mélodieux des festivals.

Michel Dupuv



Barbara Hall Mayor City Hall Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Telephone: 416 392-7001 Facsimile: 416 392-0026

Dear Friends,

Toronto's dynamic music scene includes first-class orchestras such as the Esprit Orchestra. The creativity of our musicians is evident in the original works on tonight's program.

This season's finale will be a future release on the CBC label, making this the Esprit Orchestra's third, all-Canadian recording. Fans of the Orchestra can look forward to many hours of listening pleasure.

On behalf of my colleagues on City Council, it is a pleasure to congratulate the Esprit Orchestra on a successful season, and to acknowledge the strong support and loyalty of its audiences and sponsors.

Yours truly,

Barbara Hall

Mayor



Welcome,

Tonight's performance is special in many ways.

It marks the world premiere of NEXUS member John Wyre's new piece, *Peepers*; it features the four works being recorded next week for Esprit's third all-Canadian compact disc on CBC Records' SM5000 label; and it is the culmination of the *Toward a Living Art Mini-Festival* - an exciting week that has included workshops, rehearsals, presentations by composers and a concert for students from around Toronto and Southern Ontario, featuring members of Esprit plus composers and solo artists from four provinces.

The Toward a Living Art Mini-Festival is the product of Esprit's ongoing dedication - over many years - to the development of audiences and young artists devoted to new Canadian music. The Mini-Festival is the culmination of many years of work, yet it represents only the start of some imaginative, long-term plans to develop new and diverse audiences excited by the sounds of contemporary orchestral music.

I would like to thank personally, as well as on behalf of Esprit's Board of Directors, the many supporters of this year's *Toward a Living Art Mini-Festival*:

Department of Canadian Heritage;
The Province of Ontario through the Ontario Arts Council;
Imperial Oil Charitable Foundation;
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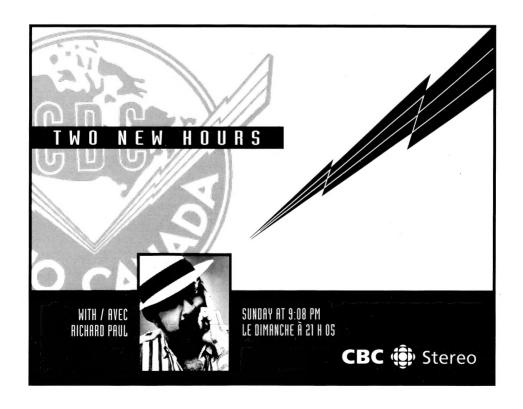
I also wish to express gratitude and appreciation to the artists, teachers, students and parents who have participated during the past week. The experience has proven to be an exciting beginning to some musically rewarding plans for the future.

Alex Pauk Esprit Orchestra

Music Director and Conductor

AT&T Canada is proud to be associated with The Esprit Orchestra.





PROGRAMME NOTES

PeepersJohn Wyre

"Every year the silence of winter is banished by the extraordinary music of the frogs. On the first warm evenings, their sounds tease that longing for spring's return with a few isolated peeps. And as the warmer weather settles in, the peepers are joined by the tree frogs and the chorus frogs to form an extraordinary choir, its unique songs exploding over the Ontario landscape.

"Having lived pondside for many years, I am fascinated with this frog music. In *Peepers* I am exploring these sounds, using the subtle end of percussion and strings.

"The rhythmic sounds of nature always bring with them a mysterious quality as the soundscape meanders through its changes. I have selected the number 12 as a primary structural number in organizing the sounds in *Peepers*. The number 12 is very common in West African music. It can be felt with a strong emphasis on two, three, four, six, or eight beats, enabling the listener to feel nature's ostinato patterns in a variety of ways.

"I am continually inspired and motivated by the work of other artists, and I must pay homage to Jim Henson, John Cage and the Ewe people of West Africa. The Ewe people draw heavily on the sounds of nature as an inspiration for their music. Jim Henson inspired me to explore in a more imaginative way the creatures that abound in nature. John Cage simply made that exploration more universal: 'Everything in creation has a spirit, and all you have to do to discover that spirit is to get it vibrating'. (John Cage)".

Nocturne Colin McPhee

Nocturne, a small and delicate work of great subtlety, shows that McPhee did indeed find a style of his own. This work, exemplifying McPhee's mature writing, makes subtle use of Balinese musical material and composed motifs, melodies, and rhythms. It appears as a transfer of the chime-like gamelan keyed instruments and gongs into a Western orchestral setting with various flute and woodwind melodies borrowed from Balinese music.

Nocturne was commissioned by the Contemporary Music Society (an American organization) and was first performed in New York in 1958 under Leopold Stokowski in a concert of Western music with Asiatic connections. Carol Oja, in a critical biography of McPhee's life and music (Colin McPhee: Composer in Two Worlds, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), describes Nocturne as "a luxuriant piece, with the shimmering energy of the gamelan transformed into a profound personal statement". The exotic rhythms and melodies do call to mind the fascinating nature of Asia, though the clear and effective orchestration is lodged in the continuing traditions of Western music. This juxtaposition of two different musical geographies marks McPhee as, in Oja's words, "among those open-minded explorers who have attempted to distil a new essence from . . . global interconnections".

Berceuse Robert Aitken

Berceuse was commissioned by Esprit Orchestra in 1991 with a grant from The Canada Council. It was premiered on March 23, 1992 by Esprit and Robert Aitken (flute). At that time, Aitken wrote the following:

"In writing Berceuse, the intention was to write a binary form piece, very much in the tradition of one of the foundations of the contemporary flute repertoire, the Piece de Concours of the Paris Conservatory. These works are generally between seven and ten minutes in length with a slow/fast relationship, and often a cadenza of considerable virtuosity joining the two sections together. In Berceuse, I was thinking of the balance between the Chinese Yin and Yang with the first part expanding outwards through the use of open harmony and natural harmonics, and the second being very intense and contained through the use of closed positions of chords. The relentlessness of the rhythm gradually breaks down into what John Cage might call "Korean unison". It is through this disintegration of the ensemble, that the flute is finally able to break free, into the refuge of the opening uplifting harmonics.

"It is with sincere thanks that I would like to express my gratitude to Alex Pauk, Alexina Louie and Esprit Orchestra for convincing me to write this piece.

"The dedication is to the memory of my father, who passed away on January 24th, 1991, and the many other members of my family, friends and associates who sleep before us".

Robert Aitken

TouchingsHarry Freedman

Touchings, for percussion and orchestra, was tailored specifically for NEXUS and emerged out of Harry Freedman's long-time personal and professional relationship with the members of the group. Commissioned by NEXUS, Touchings was made possible through a grant from The Canada Council, and was premiered with Esprit Orchestra on November 22, 1992.

Freedman's association with the musicians of NEXUS began as early as 1965 when both he and John Wyre played with the Toronto Symphony. Shortly after, Robin Engelman also joined the Symphony and eventually Freedman became friends with all the musicians who would ultimately form today's NEXUS.

Freedman and NEXUS first worked together on the film score for the National Film Board's animated film, *Tilt*, produced for the World Bank, and when a few years ago the group decided to branch out and work with orchestras, they commissioned work by such major composers as Toru Takemitsu, John Hawkins, Steve Reich - and Harry Freedman.

In writing *Touchings*, Freedman was inspired by the impressive ethnic percussion instruments from around the world collected over the years by NEXUS. Forced to limit his choice from their expansive individual collections, Freedman focused especially on the percussion instruments of Africa and Asia, and the sounds of these continents emerge predominantly in the piece. In preparation for the piece, Freedman drew

on NEXUS' expertise in the area of African music, including African folk song.

Touchings opens with the soft percussion sounds of Asian music and moves rhythmically into the musical style of Africa's Ghana. Characteristic of Freedman's own diverse musical background - he is a former jazz musician - Touchings incorporates this style as well.

Music for Heaven and Earth Alexina Louie

Procession of Celestial Deities Thunder Dragon The Void Earthrise River of Stars

"Music for Heaven and Earth, a one-movement work in five continuous sections, was commissioned especially for the Toronto Symphony's 1990 Pacific Rim Tour. The work began to take shape with a request from Maestro Gunther Herbig that the work reflect some Asian influences. This work is in keeping with a series of my works in which I have explored the connection of my art with universal concerns of the relationship of man and nature.

"I was also inspired by *The Home Planet*, edited by Kevin W. Kelley, which is a moving book filled with stunning photographs of space along with insights by an international cross-section of astronauts.

"A description of outer space by Charles Duke, Jr. influenced *The Void*: 'It was a texture. I felt like I could reach out and touch it. It was so intense. The blackness

was so intense'.

"Such reflections as the following by James Irwin had a great impact on the writing of Earthrise: 'The Earth reminded us of a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space. As we got farther and farther away it diminished in size. Finally, it shrank to the size of a marble, the most beautiful marble you can imagine. That beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart. Seeing this has to change a man. . .'

"Music for Heaven and Earth is a continuous exploration of the basic elements of my musical language (an integration of oriental musical concepts and Western art music) in a large orchestral context. Echoes of Gagaku music (Imperial court music of Japan) are heard in Procession of Celestial Deities and elements of Peking opera summon the Thunder Dragon.

"For a number of years now, my music has been influenced by the great power and the beauty of nature and man's responsibility to preserve and cherish it. *Music for Heaven and Earth* is the embodiment of my feelings of wonder, fear and awe of the vast mysterious black void of outer space, love and tenderness at the sight of our rising, beautiful, fragile Earth from the desolate surface of the moon, and finally, a celebration of our unique place in the starry heavens.

"The listener might detect the use of some exotic instruments in the percussion section, among which are to be found Chinese opera gongs and hand cymbals, Japanese temple bowls, a waterphone, a lion's roar".

Alexina Louie

Robert Aitken Flute • Composer

Noted for his outstanding interpretations of classical repertoire and extraordinary insight into contemporary music, Robert Aitken is one of the most vital and respected musicians in the world today.

Born in Nova Scotia, Aitken began his flute studies at the age of nine in Pennsylvania and later continued with Nicholas Fiore at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Following shorter periods of study with Frederick Wilkins and Julius Baker in New York, he met the eminent French flutist and pedagogue Marcel Moyse whom he considers his major teacher. In 1964 he received a Canada Council grant which enabled him to study in Europe with Jean-Pierre Rampal, Severino Gazzelloni, André Jaunet and Hubert Barwahser.

As a testimony to his talent, Robert Aitken became principal flutist of the

Vancouver Symphony at nineteen years of age, and co-principal flutist of the Toronto Symphony (under the direction of Seiji Ozawa) at twenty-four. In addition to the Order of Canada award, Aitken has been a prize winner in the Concours International de Flûte de Paris. the Concours International de Flûte pour la Musique Contemporaine at Royan, and was awarded the Canada Music Citation. the William Harold Moon Award, and the Canadian Music Medal, all for dedication to Canadian music at home and abroad. His more than forty recordings and videos on such prominent labels as BIS, Koch International, CBC, CBS-Sony, Denon, FSM and Simax, are distributed worldwide.

Among Aitken's professional accomplishments are four summers at Rudolf Serkin's Marlboro Music Festival, three at the Stratford Music Festival under the leadership of Glenn Gould, Leonard



Robert Aitken

Rose and Oscar Shumsky, and five years in the CBC Symphony with such eminent conductors as Karl Böhm, Hermann Scherchen, Heitor Villa-Lobos, Aaron Copland and Igor Stravinsky. In addition, he founded and directed Music Today (Niagara-on-the-Lake) and Music at Shawnigan, and from 1985 to 1989 was director of the Advanced Studies in Music Programme at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts.

With an international reputation as a composer, Robert Aitken believes that a commitment to contemporary music is essential for a soloist today. His success as a conductor and performer has resulted in some fifty new works being composed for him by noted personalities including George Crumb, Elliott Carter, Toru Takemitsu, Roger Reynolds, Arne Nordheim, Manuel Enriquez, R. Murray Schafer, John Beckwith, and John Weinzweig.

Continually in demand as a distinguished performer, conductor, composer and teacher, Aitken has toured more than thirty countries, with performances in most major world centres. In addition to his concertizing, he is Professor of Flute at Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany) and Artistic Director of New Music Concerts (Toronto, Canada).

NEXUS

Bob Becker • William Cahn • Robin Engelman • Russell Hartenberger • John Wyre

Formed in 1971 by Bob Becker, William Cahn, Robin Engelman, Russell Hartenberger and John Wyre, NEXUS has come to be recognized as one of the foremost chamber ensembles in the

world. Their unique repertoire and rapport captivates audiences.

During the 1994-95 concert season, NEXUS will be travelling extensively with major tours in England, Japan, Taipei and the United States. NEXUS also performed a new work with the Toronto Symphony and their new conductor, Jukka-Pekka Saraste at the Barbara Frum Atrium in the Canadian Broadcasting Centre in Toronto on March 31, 1995. Tonight marks the world premiere of *Peepers*, a work by NEXUS member John Wyre.

NEXUS' solo concert repertoire includes early twentieth-century xylophone ragtime music, ethnic music, group improvisations, works by some of the world's most famous composers and compositions by the members of NEXUS.

Their symphonic repertoire has led to appearances with major orchestras throughout the world, including the BBC Symphony, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the New Japan Philharmonic, the Orchestre Nationale de Lyon, the Taipei Symphony and the orchestras of Akron, Atlanta, Buffalo, Dallas, Detroit, Louisville, Memphis, Milwaukee, Rochester, St. Paul, Toledo, and Toronto. International acclaim has resulted from NEXUS' performances of Toru Takemitsu's From me flows what you call Time, commissioned by Carnegie Hall for its Centennial celebration.

Symphonic and solo programmes for children introduce the broad and colourful scope of percussion instruments and music in a delightful and entertaining way. In addition, NEXUS has given workshops and masterclasses at high schools, universities and colleges around the world.

NEXUS created and performed the music for the Academy Award-winning film, The Man Who Skied Down Everest. The ensemble has been featured on television in Canada, England, Japan, the United States, among them CBS Television's Sunday Morning with Charles Kuralt and Eugenia Zukerman. In 1989, NEXUS was the recipient of the Toronto Arts Award. NEXUS has participated in festivals worldwide, including the Adelaide Festival, Budapest Spring Festival, Tanglewood, Ravinia and Blossom Music Festivals, the BBC Proms in London, Tokyo Music Joy, Singapore Arts Festival and at World Drums festivals in Vancouver, Brisbane and Calgary.

NEXUS' wide and eclectic range of music has been recorded on an extensive and growing list of compact discs. These recordings are distributed in the U.S.A. by Albany Music Distributors, Inc. and in Canada by Denon Canada.

NEXUS gratefully acknowledges the

continuing support of The Canada Council, The Canada Council Touring Office, the Government of Canada Department of External Affairs, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Ontario Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation.

Harry Freedman Composer

Harry Freedman (born in 1922) is one of Canada's most recognized and frequently performed composers. His body of work consists of over 160 compositions including three symphonies, nine ballets, two hour-long stage works, various compositions for orchestra, choir, chamber groups, as well as much incidental music for stage, film and television. His wide range of knowledge and experience in all musical fields have enabled him to write in many different idioms.



NEXUS

Freedman trained originally to be a painter, enrolling at the Winnipeg School of Art in 1931. During his teen-years he developed an interest in jazz, studying clarinet from the age of eighteen, and soon moved also into the area of classical music. After World War II Freedman settled in Toronto where he studied oboe with Perry Bauman and composition with John Weinzweig at the Royal Conservatory of Music. He also took summer courses with French composer Olivier Messiaen and American conductor and composer Aaron Copland in 1949 at Tanglewood. In 1946 he joined the Toronto Symphony as its english horn player, a post he held for twenty-four years, until 1970 when he resigned to devote himself fully to composition. During his last year with the Symphony, Freedman served as its first composer-inresidence.

Mr. Freedman is a founding member of the Canadian League of Composers, formed in 1951, and an Officer of the Order of Canada (1984). In 1980 he was named Composer of the Year by the Canadian Music Council.

Alexina Louie Composer

With a growing international reputation, Alexina Louie has been widely commissioned and performed by Canada's leading orchestras, new music ensembles, chamber groups, and soloists. Notable performances include the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra performance of *The Ringing Earth* for the gala opening of Expo 86; the Montreal Symphony Orchestra's performance of the same work in the U.N. General Assembly on United Nations Day (1989); the Toronto Symphony tours of Europe (1986) and the Pacific Rim (1990); and

pianist Jon Kimura Parker's performance of Scenes From A Jade Terrace, on the programme for the official gala opening of the new Canadian Embassy in Tokyo, 1991. January, 1993 marked the world premiere of Gallery Fanfares, Arias, and Interludes, a one-hour work commissioned by the Art Gallery of Ontario for the opening ceremonies of their new gallery spaces. Orchestral works premiered in November, 1993 included Glance, commissioned by the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra and Arc, a violin concerto for Corey Cerovsek. In 1993

O Magnum Mysterium: In Memoriam Glenn Gould was performed by the BBC Symphony. The same work was performed by Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony in December, 1994.

Louie's music emphasizes craft and imagination stemming from a wide variety of influences - from her Chinese heritage to her theoretical, historical and performance studies. Through an on-going investigation of scores, recordings, literature, poetry, visual arts as well as introspection and continuous composition, Louie has developed a uniquely personal, expressive style rooted in a blend of east and west.

In 1992 Louie was awarded the SOCAN Award for being the most frequently performed Canadian composer; this was the second time she received the award since it was established in 1990. In May, 1994 Louie was awarded the Chalmer's Award for the vocal movements of Gallery, Fanfares Arias and Interludes. Recent projects included Dénouement, a new string quartet for the 1994 Vancouver Chamber Music Festival, where she was Composerin-Residence. May 5, 1995 marks the premiere date of two new works: Starstruck, a piano solo commissioned as the test piece for the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition, and Neon, a trio for the Toronto-based ensemble, Amici.



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Colin McPhee Composer

Colin McPhee was born in Montreal in 1901. Following initial musical studies in his home city, McPhee went to the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, where he graduated in 1921. He continued his studies, chiefly in piano and advanced composition, in Toronto and Paris, and in 1926 settled in New York. Among his first successes were his Concerto for Piano and Wind Octet, a Sea Chanty Suite for male chorus, two pianos and drums, and some experimental film work.

In 1931, McPhee heard, for the first time, recordings of percussion orchestras from Java and Bali. He was so fascinated with the subtle interplay of rhythm and sonorities of the gongs, gong-chimes, metallophones, drums and cymbals, that he set out on a journey to Bali to explore the music further; eventually, McPhee built a house on the beautiful island, and remained there until war threatened in 1939. After his permanent return to America, he continued his creative work composing, lecturing and writing - often under fellowships from the Guggenheim and Bollingen Foundations.

Prior to his death in 1964, McPhee had been lecturing at the University of California at Los Angeles. As a result of his restless life, McPhee is classified as an American composer by some, and as a Canadian creator by others.

John Wyre Composer

For many years John Wyre has been on a musical journey that has taken him from rock and roll, jazz, and classical music through free improvisation, contemporary compositions, and World Music.

As a performer he has been part of the Marlboro Music Festival, the Toronto Symphony, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He is the founding member of NEXUS.

His compositions have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Japan Philharmonic, NEXUS, and other major orchestras in North America.

He is artistic director of World Drums and has organized and directed international drum festivals since 1984, including presentations at Expo '86 in Vancouver, the 1987 Calgary Winter Olympics, and Expo '88 in Brisbane.

He recently created the music for an IMAX film on the mountain gorillas of Rwanda.

Alex Pauk Conductor

As both conductor and composer, Alex Pauk has been a leading exponent of new music in Canada since 1971. In addition to receiving degrees in Music and Music Education from the University of Toronto, Pauk participated for two years in the Ontario Arts Council Conductor's Workshop, then continued his studies in Tokyo, at the Toho Gakuen School of Music, and in Europe.

In the early 70's, Pauk settled in Vancouver, being named Vancouver's Musician of the Year in 1975. There, he helped establish the new music group Days Months and Years to Come, for which he was Music Director and Conductor until 1979. Prior to his move to Vancouver, Pauk was instrumental in establishing Array Music in Toronto and was its first conductor.

Pauk returned to Toronto in 1980 and founded Esprit Orchestra in 1983. In his role as Music Director and Conductor, Pauk is committed to the development of a Canadian musical literature, and this commitment has lead to Esprit's commissioning of over 30 new works by over 25 Canadian composers. Along with careful attention to programming, Pauk's work as Esprit's Music Director involves a strong role in the development of the orchestra's successful *Toward a Living Art* education programme.

In addition to his work with the orchestra, Pauk was Co-Chair for the ISCM World Music Days held in Toronto and Montreal in 1984, and in 1986 was Music Director and Conductor of the Satori Festival of New Canadian Music held in Winnipeg.

As a composer, Pauk has written over 30 concert works and has received commissions from CBC Radio, New Music Concerts (Toronto), Vancouver New Music Society, the Toronto Symphony and others. He has also composed for film, television, radio and music theatre. Most recently he has been commissioned by Erica Goodman to compose a work for harp and chamber orchestra, and will compose the music for a collaborative dance project with leading East Indian dancer/choreographer Menaka Thakkar.

Esprit Acknowledgements

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Esprit apologizes for errors or omissions in its acknowledgements. Please contact

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Functions Coordinator (Bluma Appel Theatre)

The Forum

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Jane Mallett Theatre

Head Technician

Bluma Appel Theatre

Head Electrician Head Carpenter

Property Master Sound Operator

Theatre Technician

Flyman

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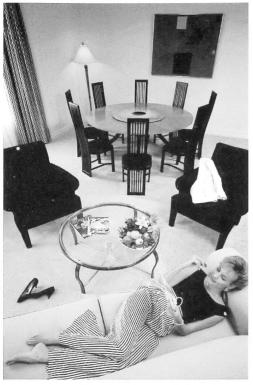
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Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the performance or intermission. This is done at the discretion of House Management. The use of photographic equipment, personal stereos or recording devices is strictly prohibited by law in this theatre. Please check them with House Management. The St. Lawrence Centre does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen articles.

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